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The agricultural techniques of the average southern farmer in growing corn are backward. Tillage is done with shallow plowing equipment and often is neglected. Artificial or natural fertilizers are generally not used, mainly because the farmers lack capital. The distribution of fertilizer, however, by the Mutual Security Agency reached Siaton in 1952. The fields are badly eroded in many localities as a result of careless farming practices. Ideal corn land is slightly rolling with good drainage during the rainy season. Since corn is planted in rows on undulating land, excessive erosion often results. Few farmers attempt to half erosion by terracing or cover-cropping, preferring to permit the land to recuperate by lying fallow for short periods. These agricultural methods are reflected in the average yield of the region, about 8 bushels per acre--40 per cent below the national level of 15 bushels an acre. The average yield per acre in the United States in 1950 was 37.4 bushels. Crops associated with corn are tabios, string-beans, cassava, mungos, and peanuts. Camotes and a variety of fruits, such as mangos, papaya and bananas are also grown. Vegetables are grown either for family consumption or sale, in gardens near the residences.

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Within the Southern Corn-Coconut region Siaton and Zamboanguita municipalities have the largest percentage (23) of cultivated land devoted to rice. Rice is grown mainly for family consumption; very little is

Vegetables and Other Garden Crops

Vegetables approximate guhang as the most important source of cash income for the majority of families in Caticugan. The majority of barriofolk have a small home garden, plagued by insects, farmyard animals and lack of care. The gardens are rarely fenced. A number of families plant vegetables mainly for sale in the poblacion. Gardens are usually tended by women, who also sell the vegetables. In a recent descriptive account of a barrio in Bulacanan province, Luzon, this fact is stated indirectly:

> At Anilao [the name of the barrio] day begins in the night's small hours, when the men rise to go fishing...When the men return home at dawn, the women are up, breakfast has long been ready...All morning the men sleep, while the women work the vegetable gardens or gather grass to sell to rig drivers.[71]

Nearly every morning a few women from Caticugan could be seen carrying vegetables to sell to the poblacion.

Vegetable gardens often are planted on the canal banks in Caticugan. This location is considered desirable because the ground is usually moist and better drained during the rainy season when many gardens die of flooding. Pieces of thorny bamboo are put in the ground to support stringbeans, gourds and squashes. A few women hang strings of seaweed on the bamboo supports of the gourds and squashes; these are said to repel insects.

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[71] "Life in Barrio Anilao," Philippines Free Press, XLIV, No. 40 (October 3, 1953), p. 28. This unsigned article consists mainly of photographs that present some realistic scenes of barrio life. Underlining in quotation by writer.

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Much has been written of the average Filipino's dislike of vegetables. Hayden states:

> A number of attempts have been made to promote vegetable gardening in the barrios. The habits of a people as to what they shall grow and what they shall eat are slow to change...[72]

In Caticugan, however, the majority of the barriofolk apparently like vegetables--making allowances for individual differences. There are a host of reasons why more vegetables are not raised and eaten by rural Filipinos; the myriad pests, lack of and excess of water, and difficulties in obtaining seed. One can become unpopular in a community where goats, pigs and chickens are rarely penned by constantly complaining to the authorities of a neighbor's marauding animals! As a result many Filipinos who might raise more vegetables become discouraged and value harmonious relationships in the community above a thriving home garden.

If the women often sell more vegetables in the marketplace than their families eat this is not because they dislike vegetables. Tomatoes that bring fifty cents in the Siaton marketplace would not feed as many persons as the cornmeal or fish this money buys. It is not that the people scorn vegetables so much as it is the necessity of selling them in order to buy needed staples. Vegetables may assume a larger role in the average rural Filipino's

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[72] Hayden, op. cit., p. 660.

diet when there is no need to barter or sell them for more filling dietary necessities and when cultural factors favor vegetable production.

Though women predominate in gardening activities in Caticugan the poblacion school teaches only the boys to grow vegetables. It was an early American idea to add gardening activities to the elementary curriculum; the officials concerned did not realize that in the barrios gardening is mainly a female activity. This is probably because women, not men, are the vendors of vegetables. In fact, a man who would sell vegetables in Caticugan would be a deviant in the eyes of most of the barriofolk. One man who vended vegetables was known to all as a bayute, a name for very feminine-acting men. In southern Negros the school boys are being trained to do a girl's work in the barrios.

Kalamongay

The most commonly grown vegetable in Caticugan is kalamongay (Tag. Malungay: Moringa oleifera Linn.), a small tree-like plant that produces leafy branches. The branches are cut and stripped; the small tender leaves are cooked as greens. Kalamongay often grows so tall that small children can climb it or the top branches are cut with a small knife tied to a bamboo. When the rains come kalamongay is cut back and new cuttings planted. Sometimes ashes are spread around the base of the newly-planted

cuttings to protect them from ants. During this period of several months kalamongay greens are relatively scarce.

Tangkong

Another popular but not as widely grown vegetable is tangkong (Ipomoea aquatica Forsk, previously known as Ipomoea reptans (Linn.) Poir.) Tangkong is an aquatic morning glory that trails on mud or floats on the water of quiet pools. Tangkong was grown in Caticugan only along the banks of the Caticugan creek. Caticugan tangkong had a local reputation for being "very fat and big."

Brown incorrectly writes: "The plant [tangkong] is not cultivated but grows wild."[73] While wild tangkong is gathered in some of Caticugan's paddies during the rainy period it is smaller and less succulent. The tangkong patches along the creek are planted and cared for by female owners. Tangkong is usually planted at the end of the rainy season. During the wet season the heavy rains swell the Siaton River, flood the Caticugan creek, and wash away tangkong patches planted at the beginning of the previous year's dry season. During the dry season tangkong is splashed with water once or twice a day or the plant is said to wilt and the leaves to become dry and yellow.

The price of tangkong varies throughout the year. When kalamongay is scarce, just after it is trimmed in

[73] Brown, op. cit., III, p. 858.

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profit of $1.85 from her tangkong patch for one month (June 16 to July 16). By the middle of July tangkong often became so cheap that she fed much of it to the pigs.

The woman who had the largest tangkong patch in Barrio Caticugan kept a record of her sales, at my request, for one month (June 16 to July 16). She sold tangkong in the poblacion twenty days in this period, netting $5.60. During the same period she also sold sixty cents worth of tangkong to persons coming to her patch in the barrio. Her total profit for the month was $6.20. The previous year the same woman said her profit from the sale of tangkong was more than $25. In fact, the young woman and her brother, both unmarried, were building a new house; the neighbors said this was largely financed by the woman's tangkong profits.

Eggplant

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Eggplants (talong) are another fairly common vegetable grown in Caticugan. Nearly every family has a few eggplants that bear small fruits. Like most vegetables new eggplants are planted at the beginning of the rainy season; the old stalks are trimmed then so they will produce new fruits. Tomatoes (tamatis) are grown but they are very small and are often sold, or eaten, when they are partly green.

Other vegetables grown are gourds (upo: Lagenaria leucantha Linn.); green onions (sibuyas bombay); patola

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(sikwa: Luffa acciangula Linn.); red peppers (sile: Capsicum frutescens Linn.); squash (calabasa: Cucurbita maxima Duc.) and stringbeans. One garden was planted with some halum (Amaranthus viridis Linn.), a stubby plant with edible reddish leaves that is said to be a favorite of the Chinese living in Manila.

Gabi

Gabi, commonly known as taro, is usually planted in Caticugan's canals. A low palm leaf wall is made by weaving leaves between bamboo stakes placed near the inside canal banks. The space between the wall and the bank is gradually filled with sediment where gabi is planted. Gabi is eaten all year, when available, except on Holy Friday; many barriofolk believe if one eats gabi on this religious holiday they will become "nervous" and subject to "shaking fits." A few planted gabi in holes that were only partially filled so when the rains came the water was retained. Ubi is another root vegetable grown in Caticugan; it is not eaten, however, when the plant is leafing for then the roots are said to be fibrous. Little gabi and ubi are raised in Caticugan or sold in Siaton poblacion.

Tobacco

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Only one family raised tobacco in Caticugan; they had planted about fifteen plants in their garden. Most of the tobacco smoked by the people is grown in Bacong and

uncooked leaves are itchy and the pigs will not eat them. The food is put in a bamboo or stone trough placed under the house. Pigs are fed once a day, usually in the late afternoon. The job of preparing food and feeding them usually is done by young girls and women.

One fairly widespread custom is the belief that a small turtle kept in kinilis water may prevent the pigs from becoming sick. The urine and feces of the little fresh-water turtles are said to have medicinal qualities and protect the pig from hog cholera. One family had three turtles in the kitchen kinilis can.

Stray pigs do a great deal of damage to vegetable gardens. In the poblacion the people explain the few vegetable gardens as due to stray pigs and goats. A local ordinance makes owners liable for their stray animals; now and then a drive is made by the police to fine owners of stray pigs. On the whole, however, the ordinance is not enforced, mainly because few people report violations. Many people complain but few take action.

Goats

Goats (kanding), like swine, are a pre-Spanish animal; Pigafetta writes that when Magellan's group landed at Cebu the people had pigs, goats and chickens. Goat meat is considered less desirable than pork by most of the people; the principalia of the poblacion would rarely serve goat meat to guests. However, the goats of Siaton

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One could write a surprisingly adequate account of barrio life by describing only the activities that occur along Siaton River. The barriofolk take their morning baths at the river, while the children play games along the sandy banks. A man waters and washes his carabaos and horses; a small boy turns over stones, looking for fish to "shoot" with his "gun." Later the women come to fetch water in bamboo tubes, or to beat the family wash on flat stones as they gossip. A man comes to the bank to see if his line caught an eel during the night; a group of men clean a slaughtered pig or goat for a wedding or funeral. A raft of green bamboos, cut upstream, floats seaward. Where the banks are high there may be tiny gardens of green onions, eggplants and tomatoes.

In the afternoon a woman comes to the river to get a lagit stone, or moss for a lihi for a new house a family is building. Women return from the poblacion where they have sold their vegetables. Several men wade across the river, carrying a coffin to the poblacion church for the final rites. Children ford the river, as they return from the elementary school. In the evening, by the light of the moon, young girls search wet stones for snails. Later, men return from an evening of drinking and talking with friends in the poblacion gubang stalls. Siaton River, shallow and quiet during the dry season, turbulent and swift during the rainy season, is truly the "life stream" of Caticugan.